

Minutes

Youth Council Meeting

Georgia Mountains Workforce Development
October 16, 2014 ~ Camp Toccoa- Yoki House
Toccoa, GA

The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Youth Council met on Thursday, October 16, 2014 at Camp Toccoa-Yoki House, in Toccoa, GA. All those present registered on a sign in sheet.

Members

Jenny Stowers
Scott Crain
Bonnie Lofredo
Tina Pratt
Stormi Damell-For Brenda Dalin
Shelby Ward
Nikki Simmons
Judi Lawson
Lynne Warren

Staff

Jessica Williams
Ebony Tucker
Samantha O'Day
Patrick Shuler

Guest

Thelma Avalos

Tina Pratt, Northeast Georgia Housing Authority, called meeting to order and welcomed attendees.

Tina began the meeting by having the council look over PY13 Quarterly Performance Report. The report shows that youth are exceeding in all three performance measures.

Jessica Williams, Youth Supervisor explained that youth programs are measured by three common measures:

- Number of youth placed in employment,
- Number of youth that have obtained a diploma or degree
- Youth that have made increases in literacy and numeracy

Each year the rates are negotiated with the state and have to be met by 80%.

This year the rates are as followed:

- Placement in employment – 60%
- Obtained Degree-Diploma – 65%
- Literacy/ Numeracy – 33 %

Jessica stated that due to some glitches in the VOS system, the program was not meeting in the literacy and numeracy at first, but we were able to work with the state to get the numbers corrected.

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Jessica went on to update the council on new programs. She informed the group that Danielle Avelar, Youth Case Manager handles the majority of the in-school programs, and now there are programs in all of the thirteen counties. She asked the council to e-mail her or Danielle if they had specific questions about programs in their area.

Jessica updated the group on the Woody Gap program, the program is up and running with five participants. The program consists of tutoring and leadership development.

Jessica introduced Samantha O'Day, Youth Intake Specialist, to provide the council with an update on the Regional Youth Detention Center program. Samantha stated that five students she and Angela came into contact with at RYDC, had been released before completing their paperwork, but are now actively attending GED classes. There are six youth in the RYDC GED program and three of them are ready to take the GED test. The very first participant in the program has completed his GED and is looking into going to college for auto mechanics. Samantha explained that she has been receiving many referrals from Hall County Department of Juvenile Justice; she has also attended the DJJ staff meeting to discuss the program. She asked the Council to send her contacts if they had any for DJJ offices in other areas.

Jessica explained that the youth at RYDC are not only preparing for their GED, but that Angela Pugh, Independent Living Mentor, does weekly workshops on life skills, confidence building, and other topics to help keep them out of trouble and out of RYDC.

Jessica asked Ebony Tucker, Youth Case Manager, to update the group on her Mountain Education and College programs. She stated that White County MEC is the largest program that she has with close to fifteen youth. Two have graduated, one who transferred to the college program, the other has moved out of state and is working. One youth is dual enrolled at North GA Technical College and is expected to have her diploma in May. She explained that the reason the number is so high at White County MEC is because of Rita Holmes. Rita works with the youth on applications and with the registrars to get us the necessary paperwork once youth earn credits. She explained that it takes a person to be willing to do this and send referrals to us. She explained that there are a few students in other MEC's but would like to see numbers grow. Ebony stated that the college program is growing and she has youth attending University of North GA, Lanier Tech, Emmanuel, North GA Tech and Athens Tech. She is looking to start recruiting for more GED students by attending staff meetings with Adult Education Staff at NGTC and Lanier Tech.

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Jessica updated the group on new programing. She stated that she had met with staff from Next Generation Club House and key staff from Dawson County Schools to develop a program that will target the homeless population to assist them with college.

She announced that the tutoring program at Gainesville has started and there are about ten students attending regularly.

Jessica asked Scott Crain, Parent Mentor Hall County Schools, to tell the group about the upcoming Transition Fair. Scott announced that the Transition Fair will be on March 6, 2015 from 9-2, location has not been determined. He asked that the council talk with their schools to get them to bring students to the fair. Last year there were over sixty vendors that brought a variety of resources for youth with disabilities. There are breakout sessions, and Kroger did mock group interviews last year. There were over 500 youth to come through the fair. He explained that he invited White County and Lumpkin County schools last year and really would like to see youth from all over the region to come. There is no charge to set up a booth and vendors are fed lunch. If interested please e-mail Scott or Jessica.

Jessica updated the group on the changes that are coming with the new Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act. The changes will take effect July 1, 2015. The youth program change from serving youth 14-21 to serving ages 14-24. The challenge with this is that currently 70% of the budget is allocated for in-school youth and 30% for out-of-school youth. In July it will change to 25% in-school and 75% out of school. Jessica explained that the plan is to transition high school students to college. The youth will have to be exited and then re-enrolled as out-of-school. Jessica explained that her concern with this is that at that point the youth's eligibility may change.

Jessica stated that she has already been contacting schools to put caps on the programs that we already have going. Also, staff are working with CTAE instructors and graduation coaches to target more youth that will be transitioning to college. Jessica went on to say that the summer program will be different this year instead of recruiting for new summer youth; the program will work with youth already in the program. Because of this, there will be no summer overviews. She explained that the following year may be different, and that staff is planning to be in schools more by doing lunchroom visits to target juniors and seniors.

Jessica explained that she has talked to John about getting a wavier so that the program can serve 50% in-school and 50% out of school, but there has been no update from the state. She will share any new information that she has at the next council meeting. The state will give one year after July 1 to make the necessary program adjustments.

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Samantha informed the council that she has revised the application, and it is a little shorter and can be printed already highlighted. She will e-mail a copy out to the council.

Tina asked council to review meeting minutes from August 14th meeting. Motion to approve minutes as written was given by Jenni Stowers, Towns County Schools second by Scott Crain.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 26, 2015 at Baby Land General in Cleveland, GA.

Motion to adjourn given by Scott Crain; seconded by Tina Pratt.

Recorders Signature: _____ Date _____